

From Transcript of Hearing, 23 July 1963

STATEMENT OF JOHN A. McCONE,  
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. McCone. It gives me great pleasure to appear before you to open the hearings on H. R. 7216, to amend the Central Intelligence Act of 1949 in the manner which will be discussed in detail by me and my deputy, General Carter.

Mr. Rivers. Could you speak just a little louder, please.

Mr. McCone. And other representatives of the Central Intelligence Agency this morning.

It is my pleasure to introduce them.

On my right is Lieutenant General Marshall S. Carter, who is the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

Mr. Richard Helms, Deputy Director for Plans.

And Mr. Lawrence R. Houston, who is the General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

I have now been associated with the Central Intelligence Agency for almost two years and I have been Director since the 29th of November, 1961.

During the period of my service with Secretary Forrestal in 1947 and 1948, and as Under Secretary of the Air Force in 1950 and '51, and more recently as Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission in 1958 to 1961, I naturally had a very considerable contact with CIA. Hence, through direct participation in recent years, and through a less intimate but still important contact over a long period of time, I have been able to personally evaluate the quality, integrity, and the dedication of the employees of the Agency.

It is my belief that the caliber of the personnel of the Agency is unequalled in any other agency of Government and, for that matter, any private

industry with which I have been associated. I can say very frankly that I have never been surrounded by a group of men of greater intellectual quality or more sincere dedication of purpose than the men associated with me in the Central Intelligence Agency.

For the most part, the senior men and women in the Agency possess a most unusual academic background, and, in addition, extending over a high degree of professionalism gained through uninterrupted service extending over a great many years with the CIA and its predecessor organizations.

With world conditions as they are, and in view of the serious responsibilities assigned to the Central Intelligence Agency by law or by Presidential directives, I believe it essential that the superb quality of men and women of CIA be maintained and indeed be improved, and, moreover, that the dedication of these employees be recognized by the provision of adequate benefits.

I believe the enactment of this legislation will be a positive step in this direction. The legislation will significantly improve the career structure of the Agency and will permit greater efficiency in personnel management of the Agency.

As this Committee knows, this legislation is designed to establish a Central Intelligence Agency retirement system which will be similar to the retirement system of the Foreign Service, which extends also to personnel of other departments of Government who operate extensively abroad. This retirement system differs importantly from that of the Civil Service, which is designed to meet the requirements of domestic employment.

Other provisions of the bill are mainly technical in nature and merely bring the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 in line with authorities already existing in the Foreign Service Act, and in other legislation. Some of these arrangements are new to CIA, but none is new in government, and

there are precedents for each one as will be shown in today's presentation.

The task of the Central Intelligence Agency is a most serious and difficult one. We are charged by law with the responsibility of furnishing to the President and his policy advisers evaluations concerning the intentions of other countries, most particularly of the Communist Bloc. Upon these evaluations hinge a great many basic decisions which affect the security and the future of the United States, and, for that matter the free world.

We in the Government can afford nothing less than the best in personnel who shoulder this responsibility, and the proposed Central Intelligence Agency retirement system will in my opinion do a great deal in maintaining the quality of that which we now have and in encouraging its continual improvement.

I therefore heartily endorse this legislation, and I urge its early and favorable consideration by the Congress.

As this Committee knows, Lieutenant General Marshall Carter, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, serves as the general manager of the Central Intelligence Agency. This is a necessary arrangement if I, as the President's principal intelligence officer, am to be free to consider problems of the intelligence community as a whole.

General Carter, therefore, is the man in CIA most familiar with all of the details of this legislation and best equipped to present the matter to you and to answer your questions.

However, this is a subject which has been close to me in CIA and in the State Department when I was studying this problem as a member of Secretary Dulles' personnel policy committee, and also in the Defense Department as well.

In introducing General Carter and asking that he continue this presentation, I wish to assure you of my support of this legislation and my desire to answer any questions you may care to direct to me.

General Carter